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191347Z Dec 01

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AF-00 A-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
DS-00 EUR-00 UTED-00 VC-00 H-01 TEDE-00 LAB-01
VCE-00 NSAE-00 TEST-00 USIE-00 IIP-00 DSCC-00 DRL-02
NFAT-00 SAS-00 /004W

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0590
INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS HARARE 003798

SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX, ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR KRAFT, AF/RA FOR SWANN,
INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ZI](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT -- MUGABE CRITICIZES U.S. IN STATE
OF THE NATION ADDRESS

1. PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE DEDICATED SEVERAL MINUTES OF HIS DECEMBER 18 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS TO CRITICISM OF THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT (ZDERA). MUGABE DESCRIBED THE BILL AS "REPUGNANT AND PROVOCATIVE" AND SAID THAT IT WAS ".A BOLD INSULT TO THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE. AN INTOLERABLE INSULT TO THIS HOUSE (THE PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE)." MUGABE'S CRITICISM WAS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT THE U.S. CONGRESS, ESPECIALLY AT SENATOR HELMS, AND CHARACTERIZED ZDERA AS AN ASSAULT ON ZIMBABWE'S SOVEREIGNTY.
2. THE DECEMBER 19 EDITION OF THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED "HERALD" GAVE MUGABE'S SPEECH FRONT-PAGE PLAY UNDER THE HEADLINE "PRESIDENT SLAMS U.S." SUB-HEADS READ "SOVEREIGNTY UNDER THREAT -- SANCTIONS BID REPUGNANT, PROVOCATIVE."
3. STATE-CONTROLLED ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING CORPORATION (ZBC) RADIO AND TELEVISION LED THEIR DECEMBER 18 AND 19 NEWS PROGRAMS WITH REPORTS ON THE STATE OF THE NATION SPEECH. ZBC REPORTING EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT MUGABE'S ASSERTION THAT ZDERA STEMS FROM AN AMERICAN DESIRE TO "PUNISH" ZIMBABWE FOR ITS LAND REFORM EFFORTS.
4. THE DECEMBER 19 EDITION OF THE INDEPENDENT DAILY "THE DAILY NEWS" ALSO CARRIED AN ARTICLE ABOUT MUGABE'S ADDRESS, BUT PUBLISHED IT ON PAGE 2 UNDER HEADLINE "MUGABE EVADES KEY ISSUES." THE "DAILY NEWS" REPORT FOCUSSED ON ISSUES SUCH AS ZIMBABWE'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE, ISSUES THE PAPER CLAIMS MUGABE OVERLOOKED IN HIS ADDRESS. THE PAPER DID REPORT ON MUGABE'S CRITICISM OF THE U.S., BUT GAVE IT ONLY ONE SENTENCE AT THE END OF THE

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STORY.
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